



CONGRESSMAN JOHN P. MURTHA

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MURTHA'S CORNER

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INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER:

NAVY DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD 2

LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT GRANTS 2

RECENT LEGISLATION 3

MURTHA CELEBRATES 35 YEARS IN CONGRESS 4

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LOCAL PROJECTS FUNDED IN SPENDING BILL

Congress has passed a \$410 billion Appropriations Bill that provides funding for those federal agencies that have been operating without a budget for the current fiscal year.

"This legislation provides funding for worthy projects that benefit our community and improve the quality-of-life in our region," said Murtha.

Murtha secured funding in the FY09 Omnibus Appropriations Bill for the following local programs:

- \$2,000,000 for the Southwestern Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Technologies program. This program supports local police departments with grants to purchase computers, communication devices, police vehicles and other necessary

equipment, as well as provide necessary training to ensure officer safety;

- \$207,000 for Natural Biodiversity, Cambria County, to continue their efforts to restore stream-bank habitat and improve water quality in the Kiski-Conemaugh River Basin and adjacent areas;

- \$1,100,000 for a Correctional Education Clearinghouse and Educational Program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP);

- \$350,000 for the Center for Global Competitiveness at Saint Francis University and Saint Vincent College;

- \$15,900,000 for the general construction of Locks & Dams 2, 3 and 4 on the Monongahela River;

- \$25,800,000 for general construction of the

Emsworth Locks & Dams and \$600,000 for general construction of the Grays Landing Locks & Dams in Masontown;

- \$8,000,000 for the South Central Pennsylvania Environmental Infrastructure Program. This program provides the Army Corps of Engineers with the funding to design and construct projects for wastewater treatment, water supply, and water resource protection and development in Allegheny, Armstrong, Cambria, Greene, Fayette, Indiana, Somerset, Washington and Westmoreland Counties;

"The Environment Infrastructure Program has helped thousands of PA residents and businesses gain access to clean and reliable water

continued on page 3

WORKING TO JUMPSTART OUR ECONOMY

Congress recently passed a \$787 billion Economic Stimulus Plan, a combination of targeted spending and tax relief, necessary to jumpstart the American economy.

"Over 4.3 million Americans have lost their jobs in the past fourteen months," said Murtha. "Failure to act and to prevent further economic

decline would not only be irresponsible but disastrous for American families. Fixing our economy is going to require a multi-facet approach, and we must act to create new jobs, help American families, and make critical investments in our nation's infrastructure, education, health care system, science technology, and

energy usage."

The Economic Stimulus Plan will create or save 143,000 Pennsylvania jobs; provide a Making Work Pay tax cut of up to \$800 for 4.9 million Pennsylvanian workers and their families; provide over \$1 billion to construct or repair Pennsylvanian roads

continued on page 3

RECEIVES NAVY DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Congressman Murtha was recently presented with the Department of the Navy Distinguished Public Service Award. The award, granted by the Secretary of the Navy, is the highest form of public service recognition bestowed by the Department of the Navy for a non-employee. It consists of a gold medal, miniature medal, lapel bar, rosette, and a certifi-

cate signed by the Secretary.

According to the Department, "nominations for this award will be limited to those extraordinary cases where individuals have demonstrated exceptionally outstanding service of substantial and long term benefit to the Navy, Marine Corps, or as Department of the Navy as a whole." Murtha was

presented with the award in appreciation of his distinguished public service to the Department of the Navy.

"I'm proud of the service and sacrifices our troops are making, and I'm honored to receive this distinguished award from the Navy," said Murtha. "We have an obligation to ensure that our men and women in uniform have

the most modern equipment, effective training, first-class medical care, and family advocacy resources."

The certificate of award is signed by Donald C. Winter, the 74th Secretary of the Navy. Secretary Winter was nominated by President George W. Bush and was sworn into office on January 3, 2006.

MURTHA ANNOUNCES LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT GRANTS

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) program awards grants directly to fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service (EMS) organizations. These grants strengthen our emergency preparedness and ability to respond to fire and fire-related hazards. Locally, these competitive grants have helped first-responder organizations with purchasing vehicles and equipment, and providing necessary funds for training, wellness and fitness, and safety modifications to stations and facilities. Since 2004, nearly \$2.75 billion has been provided in grants across the United States.

Local recipients include (from January-March 2009):

Adah Volunteer Fire Department, Fayette County	\$166,250
Arnold Volunteer Engine Company #2, Westmoreland County	\$92,705
Bell Township Volunteer Fire Department, Westmoreland County	\$45,394
Bobtown-Dunkard Twp. Volunteer Fire Department, Greene County	\$261,250
Carrolltown Fire Engine Company, Cambria County	\$151,606
City of Johnstown Fire Department, Cambria County	\$78,363
Clymer Volunteer Fire Company, Indiana County	\$99,664
Conemaugh Volunteer Fire Company, Cambria County	\$44,508
Crabtree Volunteer Fire Department, Westmoreland County	\$117,538
Dauntless Fire Department, Cambria County	\$38,637
Fayette Emergency Medical Service, Fayette County	\$240,000
Hannastown Volunteer Fire Company, Westmoreland County	\$42,750
Hose Company #6, Kittanning, Armstrong County	\$57,286
Lock #4 Volunteer Fire Company, Washington County	\$59,552
Markle Volunteer Fire Department, Armstrong County	\$41,776
Mt. Pleasant Twp. Vol. Fire Dept. #2 of Trauger, PA, Westmoreland County	\$261,250
Oklahoma Volunteer Fire Dept. #1, Westmoreland County	\$75,287
Seward Volunteer Fire Company, Westmoreland County	\$22,743
Sipesville Volunteer Fire Company, Somerset County	\$33,345
South Strabane Fire Department, Washington County	\$35,522
South Union Volunteer Fire Company, Fayette County	\$40,375
Stockdale Volunteer Fire Department, Washington County	\$59,375
Stoystown Volunteer Fire Company, Somerset County	\$237,500
Sewickley Twp. Vol. Fire Department #1, Westmoreland County	\$106,231
Sewickley Twp. Vol. Fire Company #4, Westmoreland County	\$95,000
West Hills Regional Fire Department, Inc, Cambria County	\$16,212
Westmoreland Homesteads Vol. Fire Department, Westmoreland County	\$35,568
Wilmore Volunteer Fire Company, Cambria County	\$5,501

STIMULUS BILL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and bridges; modernize schools and make college more affordable by increasing the Pell Grant for 244,000 Pennsylvania college students; and help workers hurt by the economy, including the 433,700 Pennsylvanians that are out of work, by extending unemployment benefits.

Within Murtha's subcommittee's jurisdiction, the plan includes \$4.2 billion to repair and modernize Department of Defense facilities and to invest in facility energy efficiency projects, or which \$400 million will be used to im-

prove military medical facilities and \$153 million will be used to rehabilitate Army barracks. With the Department of Defense being the single largest consumer of energy in the world, Murtha also included \$300 million for research into renewable and alternative energy sources.

The White House has created a website (www.recovery.gov) that features information on how the stimulus plan is working, and includes information about Federal grant awards and contracts.

**LOCAL PROJECTS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

sources," said Murtha. "At the same time, these projects improve the environmental quality of our rivers and streams by fixing or replacing malfunctioning septic systems that release raw sewage into our waterways."

- \$2,000,000 for the WV and PA Flood Control Program;
- \$2,250,000 for operations and maintenance of the Johnstown Local Flood Protection Project;
- \$147,386 for the Economic Growth Connection (EGC), which assists businesses in Westmoreland and Fayette Counties;
- \$147,386 for the Johns-

town Area Regional Industries (JARI) Incubator and Workforce Development program;

- \$1,000,000 for the Vestaburg-New Hill Sanitary Sewer System Project, Washington County;
- \$1,000,000 for the Dunbar Township Municipal Authority Sewer Project, Fayette County;
- \$200,000 for the Ralphton Water Project, Somerset County;
- \$381,000 for the expansion of the emergency department at Washington Hospital;
- \$381,000 for the expansion of the emergency

Recent Legislation Passed by Congress:**SCHIP Reauthorization and Expansion**

The State Children's Health Insurance Program provides health care coverage for children in modest-income families that earn too much for Medicaid, but not enough to afford private insurance. This legislation, signed by President Obama on 02/04/09, ensures that roughly 7 million children, including over 227,000 PA kids, continue to receive coverage, and also extends coverage to 4.1 million additional uninsured children.

Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009

On average, women earn just 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man performing the same job. This legislation, signed into law by President Obama on 01/29/09 closes the pay gap between men and women, and gives workers 180 days following a discriminatory paycheck to file a charge with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Digital TV Conversion Delay

This legislation, signed into law by President Obama on 02/11/09, delays the nationwide digital conversion until June 12, 2009. The TV Converter Box Coupon Program, which allows households to obtain up to two coupons toward the cost of purchasing eligible digital converter boxes, will receive \$650 million from the recent Economic Stimulus Plan to assist over 2 million U.S. households currently on the waiting list to receive a coupon and prepare for the conversion.

department at Highlands Hospital, Fayette County;

- \$143,000 to continue development of a comprehensive community-based geriatric care program at Excelsa Health Frick Hospital, Westmoreland County;
- \$381,000 for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Career Centers, located in southwestern PA and WV;
- \$323,000 for the Veteran Community Initiatives to continue providing job assistance and counseling programs to area veterans;
- \$950,000 for the Westmoreland County Transit Authority to purchase new

vehicles and to renovate their maintenance facility;

- \$760,000 for the Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority to purchase new express buses for residents to travel into Pittsburgh;
- \$285,000 for the Cambria County Transit Authority to replace their aging vehicle wash system and radio communications;
- \$95,000 for the Fayette Area Coordinated Transportation to construct a bus storage garage;
- \$760,000 for the continuation of the Mon/Fayette Expressway, the Uniontown to Brownsville section in Fayette County.

MURTHA CELEBRATES 35 YEARS SERVING IN CONGRESS

On February 5, 2009, Congressman Murtha commemorated a milestone, 35 years since first taking the oath of office to represent the people of western Pennsylvania in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"It has been both a privilege and an honor to continue serving the hard-working people of Western Pennsylvania," said Murtha. "A lot has changed in Pennsylvania over the past thirty-five years. We saw the decline of our coal and steel industries, and the emergence of a new diversified economy built on good paying health care, defense, manufacturing, tourism, and high-tech jobs. We built roads, hospitals, community centers, and parks. We started long-term investments in our locks and dams, our police departments, and our sewage and water infrastructure. The challenges we face today are enormous, and certainly there is much good work to be done. I'm confident that, just as we've done over the past thirty-five years, we will continue to improve our quality of life here in western Pennsylvania and throughout our nation."

Excerpts from Murtha's book, "From Vietnam to 9/11."

"Ever since I was a young boy, I had two goals in life-

I wanted to be a colonel in the Marine Corps and a member of Congress. I'm not sure what instilled those goals in me...My interest in politics started



when I was ten years old and I heard President Roosevelt address the nation. His "fireside chats" were major events in our household, and we would all

dane event. I received a phone call one evening from the chairman of the Democratic Party in Cambria County and he said he wanted to talk to me.

When I arrived at his office, he said, "Jack, we need a candidate to run against the incumbent congressman in the Twelfth District and we



gather around the radio."

"I had no game plan or strategy to enter politics, just a desire to do so. My decision to enter politics was actually a very mun-

think you'd be a good candidate." It was that simple."

"I accepted the challenge and the next day I was out campaigning. The incum-

bent was a Republican, John P. Saylor, who had represented the district for over twenty years. I lost the election (1968). I enjoyed the challenge of politics, though, and the interaction with people during the campaign. I decided to run for a seat in Pennsylvania's House of Representatives and won (1969). A few years later Congressman Saylor died in office, and in early 1974 I decided to run for Congress again in the special election held to fill the vacant seat."

The February special election was covered by the national press. In the midst of the Nixon Watergate scandal, Murtha's race was seen as a bellwether for the Democrats chance in the upcoming November midterm elections. Former Vice President Walter Mondale and current Vice President Joe Biden came to Pennsylvania to campaign for Murtha. With a total of 120,000 votes cast, Murtha won by 122 votes.

Murtha became the first Vietnam combat veteran elected to the U.S. Congress. A long and distinguished career of public service soon followed.

Of the nearly 10,650 men and women who have served since 1789 in the U.S. House of Representatives, only 80 have served longer than Murtha.

The Floor of the U.S. House of Representatives has 448 seats. These seats are unassigned, and Members can sit wherever they like, except for the last Democratic seat, in the last row. That seat belongs to Congressman Murtha, and he is surrounded by members of the Pennsylvania Delegation and our friends from neighboring states. Numerous stories have been written about Murtha's Corner, and this newsletter is appropriately titled as such.